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ABSTRACT

The education-to-labor market transitions experienced by young people in England and in eastern and western Germany were compared. The eastern German portion of the study was based on a 1996 study that included a survey of 100 trainers and 1,000 apprentices in 12 companies; in-depth interviews with 18 trainers, career advisers, and others; and interviews with 12 young eastern Germans who had experienced relatively smooth education-to-work transitions and 12 young eastern Germans whose education-to-work transitions had not been smooth. The findings were compared with those of earlier interviews with 12 western German and 12 English youths who had recently completed the education-to-labor market transition. The analysis of transition behaviors and experiences in eastern Germany revealed considerable resonances with the problems and contradictions that have beset British education and training policy in recent decades. It was concluded that the erosion of the dual system of vocational education and training (employer-sponsor apprenticeships and government-sponsored vocational schools) documented in eastern Germany might portend future trends in western Germany. (Twenty tables/figures are included. The following items are appended: chronicle of events in 1989-1990; information about Leipzig's school system; diagrams illustrating school-to-work trajectories in West Germany and England; and a report on a study of transitions, careers, and destinations in West Germany and England. The bibliography lists 107 references.) (MN)

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